Knotting Matters

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

Issue #108 September 2010

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Knotting Matters

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

Issue 108 - September 2010 www.igkt.net

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	Members	Non-members
Full Page	£50	£70
Half Page	£25	£35
Quarter Page	£15	£20
Full (colour)	£140	£170

COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Front:

Bernard Cutbush - one of our most Senior Knotsmen as reviewed by Owen K. Nuttall (see page 9 & 10) and the only person's face to have graced the front cover of Knotting Matters since Issue #100!

Back:

The Dahlia Knot invented by Bernard Cutbush superimposed above the headstall tied for an alpaca by members of the Solent Branch.

Features

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A Banner Competition!
by **Hon Sec Barry Mault**

(repeat from previous issue to encourage more entries - hurry! Your chances of winning are severely diminished when you do not enter!!!)

The Council have decided to change the Guild contact address back to that of the Secretary:

Barry Mault Hon. Secretary, International Guild of Knot Tyers
144 Millhouse Lane,
WIRRAL,
CH46 6DT,
UK

Barry Mault
Hon. Secretary

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GUILD POSTAL ADDRESS
for all correspondence
Hon Sec, IGKT
144 Millhouse Lane
Wirral, CH46 6DT, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

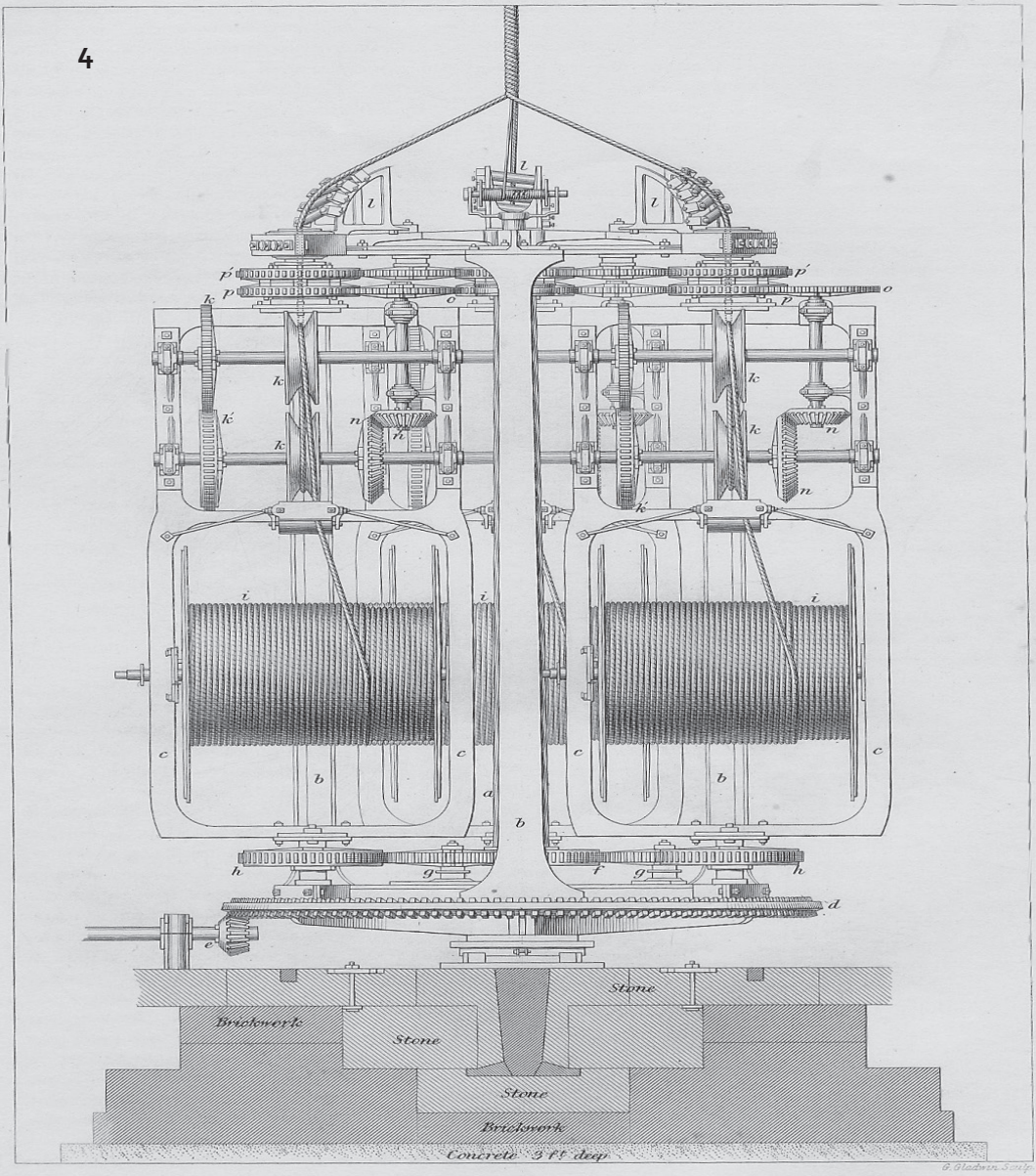
Annual Subscription Rates

Juniors	£5
Adults	£23
Families	£27
Group	£10

Corporate - by arrangement
The IGKT is a UK Registered Charity No. 802153

PRINTED BY
Gipping Press Ltd.
Needham Market
Tel: 01449 721599
Fax: 01499 721372

ISSN 0959-2881



ROPE. LAYING MACHINE.

One version of a rope-laying machine, which may have spelled the end of the rope-walk. Anyone have any thoughts about the introduction of such machines and care to drop a line to the Editor about what you know? e-mail to knottingmatters@igkt.net or write to the Editor at the address shown on page 3.

Notes from the Mousepad

A long stay in hospital has forced our inestimable Honorary Secretary to lay low for a while. He is on the road to recovery but his protracted absence has made the work of other Council members that much more complex and, frankly, without his presence we are a little like a ship without a properly functioning engine - able to respond to commands from our Chairman, but not quite as effectively as we or our members might wish. Of course our Chairman and other Council members have stepped up to the plate, but we do wish Barry back in the saddle with all good haste after a proper period of recovery and recuperation.

A note from your Councilmember, Phil Cook:

The DVD enclosed with the last issue of KM, #107, is an 'autoplay' disc for a PC. Simply put it in the CD/DVD tray and it should play automatically (or you will be asked if you wish to play it). If it doesn't, then go to the CD/DVD 'root' folder and double click 'igkt.exe'. If you are still having trouble, write to Phil Cook and he will resolve your questions (address in Membership Handbook).

Passed On - Nick Kitchiner

It is with sadness that we have to report the death of yet another member of our clan - Nick Kitchiner of Spetisbury, Blandford Forum, Dorset, UK. This notice comes from P Young:

I'm sorry to inform you that Nick Kitchiner, member of the IGKT, has died. He always enjoyed reading the magazine, both as a sailor and as a mathematician. Thank you for the pleasure and interest it has given him over the years.
Regards
P Young

If any other member knows more about Nick and would care to add some more detail, please contact the Editor at knottingmatters@igkt.net or write to Lindsey Philpott at the address given on page 3.

Letters To The Editor

Dear Lindsey

It is just 20 years ago [before April of 2009] that I submitted the enclosed [see below and next page] for consideration by the Guild, and it occurred to me that the Guild could, since no-one came up with any objections or earlier versions, now announce to the world "A Knot That Is New" - it worked for Dr. Hunter (who, incidentally, sailed in a New Zealand Shipping Co. ship) which made the front page of the Times! Though, as you know, it was uncovered as the Zeppelin Knot. I thought that it would be good (recruiting) publicity for the Guild, and to establish it in the eyes of the laity as the world authority that it is.

At the same time, the deviser, my old friend Bob Daniel would be very happy. He's quite old and nearly blind - I used to crew for him sailing the Marlborough Sounds at the top of the South Island [of New Zealand].
All the best,

Roger Carter
PS It was in KM Issue #26, Winter 1989, page 14.

[Your wish is our command - Ed]

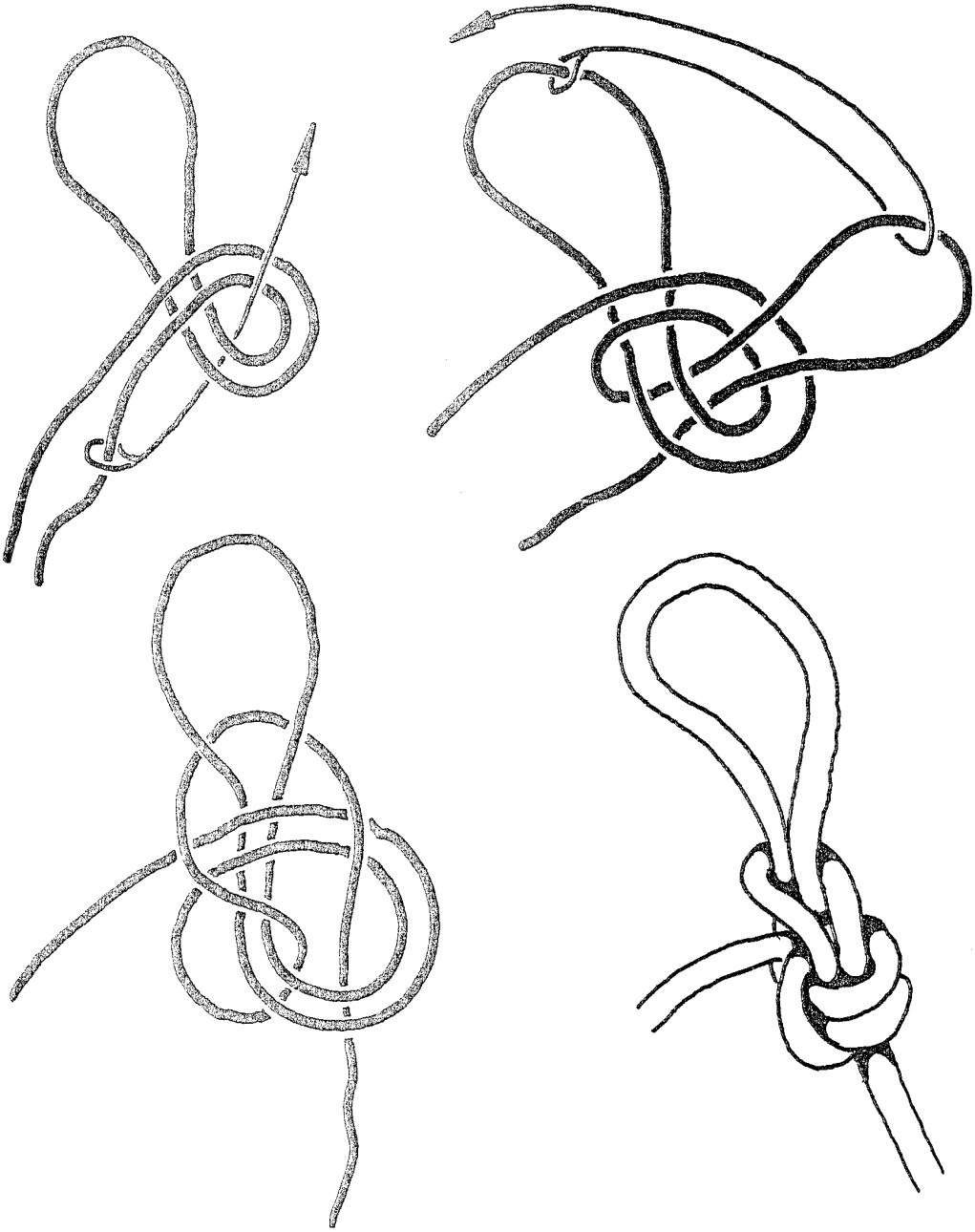
Roger submits this loop knot on behalf of a friend. It seems to Roger a good knot in every way - easy to tie, capsize and untie; strong and secure; pleasing in its balance and symmetry. It is also versatile, in that it can be made to face in either direction along the rope, depending on which way the first bight is turned, making the knot useful for a drag rope or as a foothold on a climbing rope, perhaps.

Roger can find nothing exactly like it in his library, so - the question is - does anyone know this loop knot already?

[Because this has been published now for over 20 years, I would think that it should be hailed on the Guild web-site, an announcement made to the press and some general brou-ha-ha made with respect to this loop knot - what do you think? - Ed]

The Daniel Harness Loop

from Roger CARTER in New Zealand



From the Editor's Blotter

Seems like Summer has finally arrived for us in California and they are moving forward to Autumn for those who are in the UK, and I suppose that it cannot be far to Spring for our antipodean neighbors. I would have anticipated that more knots would be forthcoming but - knot yet - seems to be the reply. You must all be busy out there performing a great service to your community by tying up large portions of their time getting them to attempt to tie knots! Please feel free to write a line or two of what you have been doing, so that we can share in your glory or commiserate with you if you were rained out.

As usual our web-site has been experiencing plenty of activity and, for those who do not visit the web, some of the activities of participants on the forum (our web chat pages) have once again been somewhat firm in their opinions. However, it appears that none of our members has stepped up to the plate (or the wicket if you prefer) to take on the task of providing our written communications with a brief summary of those electronic communications. There has been, as they say, a deafening silence in response to my plea in the last issue. Let us therefore let sleeping dogs lie and the internet will remain a closed book for the time being to our magazine readers - what a pity! By the way - we had a request that I had to omit by not including it - please do not include anything in your letters, articles and submissions that speaks to a specific religion, political position, sexual preference, race or age - for or against. We will not publish such material.

Speaking of no response there was also a deafening silence in response to our request from those who submitted what they think of as new knots in Issue #107 (Summer, 2010). Nobody has yet agreed or disagreed that those are or are not new knots. Perhaps you could take a moment to scan that last issue (pages 9 through 11) and provide us with your thoughts? What about the new knot forms in this issue?

Thinking of possible newness - there is a possibility of having a birthday corner in your magazine - do you want such a thing or is that not something you want here?

Wishing you all good speed, fair words and photos, and fair leads.
Sincerely yours, **Lindsey Philpott**

EUPHEMISM
"STABBED WITH A BRIDPORT DAGGER"
It meant 'To be hanged' (Bridport made so many gallows ropes)
I wonder if the Bridport ropewalk is still in existence? Do let us know if you are aware of its whereabouts or, indeed, of the whereabouts of ANY ropewalk (Portsmouth, UK and Mystic, USA excepted) - Ed.

BERNARD MASTER KNOTSMAN

by Owen K. Nuttall

To his friends he is Bernard: to those who do not know him he is Bernard Cutbush, Knotsman supreme. Bernard was born in Essex in 1924 where he lived until he was seven, and then his family moved to London. On leaving school in 1939, he went to the training ship T.S. WARSPITE off Grays, Essex. It was to train him for a life at sea with the Royal Navy or the Merchant Navy. This training school was run by the Marine Society for working class boys of good character and [Bernard] was [supposed to be there] for a full year. This lasted just five months as war was declared, and the school was closed down because it was near Tilbury docks. Whilst he was in training, he learnt basic knotting amongst other duties. Bernard went to sea with the Merchant Navy in August 1941, aged 16. During the war years one of his ships was called 'The Svendoyn' - a Norwegian whaling ship (named after the inventor of the explosive harpoon). This boat left Liverpool for New York and on the way back it was torpedoed, but with an escort it made it to Iceland with no loss of life. The same boat later hit an iceberg and sank (Bernard was not on board).

He spent most of the war years in the Med with an oil supply ship for the war effort. After the war he joined the Delilian in Glasgow going to Montreal, amongst the crew were several sea men from the Shetland Isles. One of these was making belts and showed Bernard how to make them. This was 1950 and that is what gave him the passion for knotting. Bernard stayed in the Merchant Navy for 35 years visiting a total of 68 countries, including a long spell up and down the west coast of America. Unfortunately, Bernard had to leave the Navy with heart trouble, then he worked in factories until he retired at the age of 60. He then turned to knotting as his main hobby, his other hobbies included stamp collecting and putting ships in bottles.

Bernard is best known for his intricate knot boards, which he draws on paper first. His best-known one was on the front cover of The Ashley Book of Knots. He has also presented one of his knot boards to Prince Andrew. Bernard now lives in Nottingham, [where] he used to teach the sea cadets at T.S. ORION on Sundays for 4 cadets for two hours knot training, boys one week - girls the next week. While he was training them he completed about 40 knot boards. Bernard made the frames and the cadets made the knots.

Bernard (cont'd)

In 1982, the Guild was formed with 22 members. Bernard was one of the founder members, along with Geoffrey Budworth and Des Pawson. Des was awarded the MBE for his services to rope and knotting. They started advertising for like-minded Knotsmen. Sadly, age has taken its toll on founder members. Dennis (Spud) Murphy, Albert R.N., Harold Scott and Frank Harris have all passed away. I believe only five members from the originals are left.

At the ripe old age of 86, Bernard still enjoys going to Knot Meetings with the I.G.K.T., though now he has to rely on someone taking him. He once gave a talk on his Knot Boards at a meeting of the West Yorkshire Branch. This was brought about by Jeff Wyatt who went to Bernard's apartment and took many photographs of his memorabilia, then Ken Nelson downloaded them onto his laptop and the photos were projected on to a screen while Bernard talked about his Knot work (when, where and how). His apartment is totally dedicated to knots, from intricate knot boards to decorated light switches. Over the years, Bernard has used miles of string and cord. One of Bernard's knot inventions is his Dahlia Knot (probably the hardest single knot to tie), which was shown in KM 101. With age, Bernard sometimes forgets how to tie certain knots, but he has plenty of knots books to fall back on. He has drawers full of pre-tied knot board edgings, waiting for new knot boards.

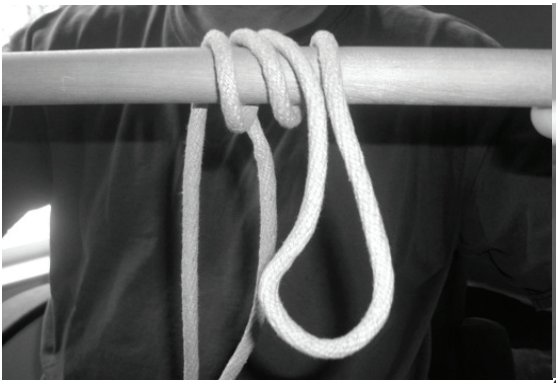
Well done Bernard I am proud of you.

Owen K. Nuttall

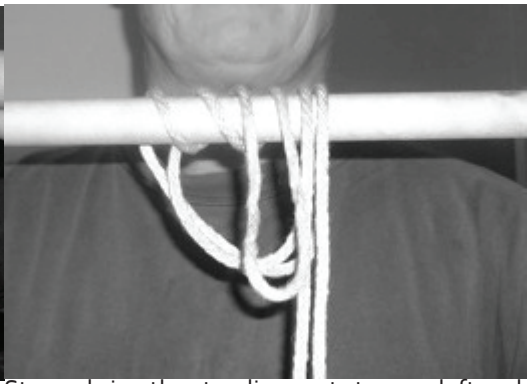
Trying to improve John Smith's Icicle Hitch:

First Fix: This knot does not stretch out down the pole.
Second Fix: This knot is more likely to stay tied, or not unravel, even without continuous tension.
Third Fix: Can pull either direction on pole.

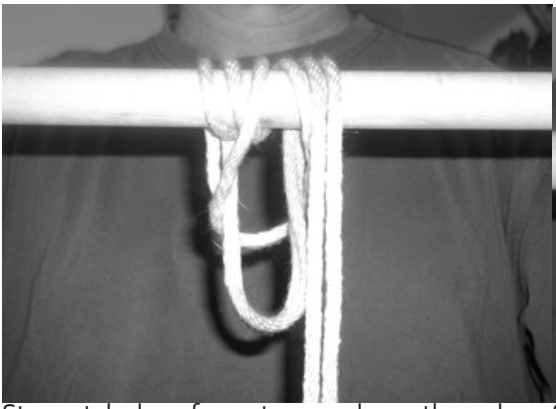
Possible Uses: 1) Tie end of cane fishing pole to line. 2) Tie to top of walking stick, without having to drill a hole.
Please advise: Will Frog Hitch hold better than Icicle Hitch? And: Is Frog Hitch a new knot?
Below [next page] are pictures of the five steps to the Frog Hitch.
Thank you,
David Hughes



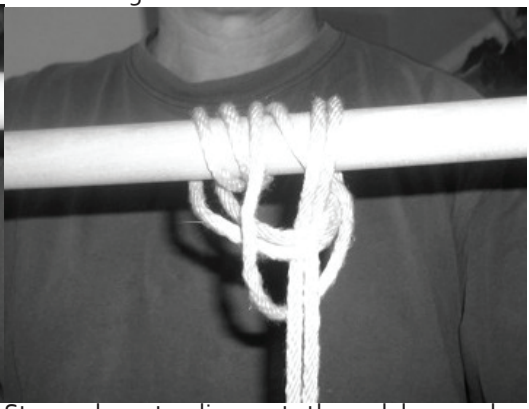
Step 1: Throw a bight over as a round turn…



Step 2: bring the standing parts to your left and form a loop, passing s.part ends away from you on left of bight.

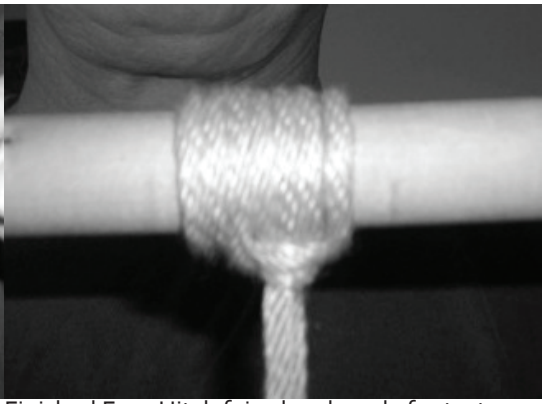


Step 3: take loop from step 2 and pass through bight from step 1.



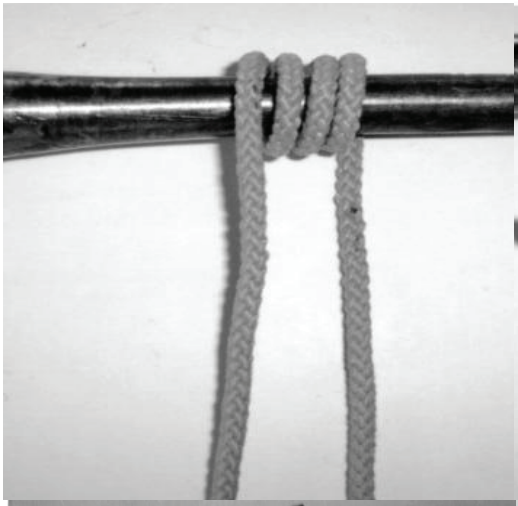
Step 4: drop standing parts through loop and bring bight to front as shown.

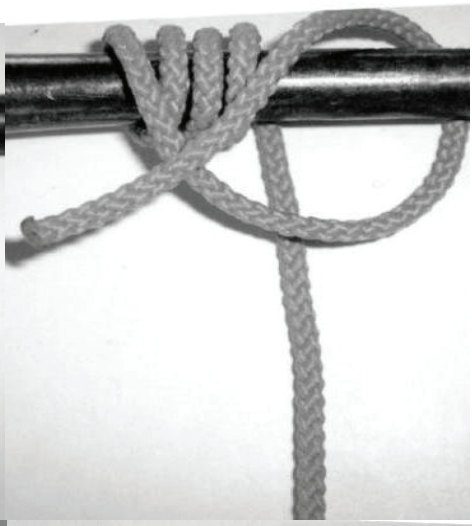
Step 5: take upper part of loop, pull out to your left, twist top of loop toward you once and slip over end of pole, icicle or cane…

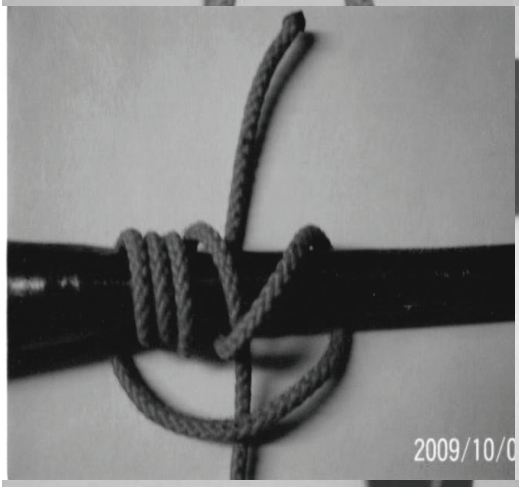


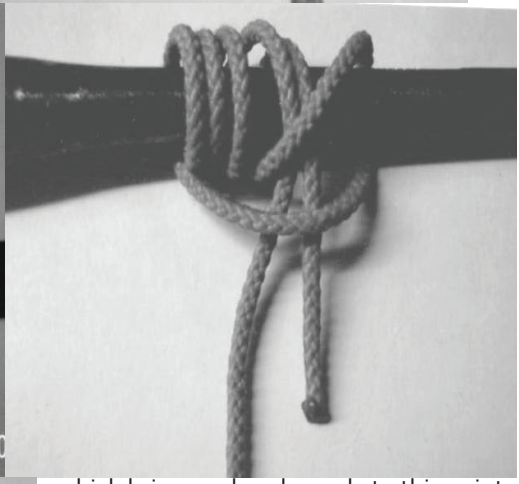
Finished Frog Hitch faired and ready for testing!

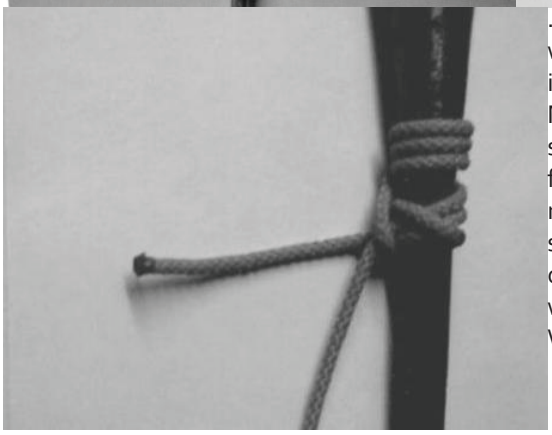
And from non-member but interested knot-tver. Erwin Fuerst:











...which brings us handsomely to this point where we have two potential challenges for improvement over John Smith's Icicle Hitch. Mr. Fuerst notes "I have come up with a version that can be tied at any location of the foundation, which will extend the use of this remarkable hitch." Mr. Fuerst is a retired surgeon of some 50 years and has used tying of knots as "...a pleasure, a challenge and a way to relax."

What are your thoughts, knot-tyers?

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

My Fellow Knot Tyers

Another season fast approaches its end with this awaited issue of KM. In all my years of setting out to sea, I have found that my internal clock has been truly tied to this climatic schedule and I must say that it is one I have come to enjoy. For with this summer's end in the Northern Hemisphere, I will be completing my career as an Offshore Fisheries Biologist with the South Carolina Marine Resources Research Institute and look forward towards a transformation of sea-faring life. But for now, with hot and humid weather in the Southern USA (no Gulf oil has arrived yet), we are looking across the pond at the continuous frontal waves, which develop off Africa and become the named storms called hurricanes. As I write this letter, it may be appropriate that the storm we are watching is named Danielle, followed by Earl, but the sea schedule stands, albeit interrupted.

One clear change that I will have to adapt to in the coming future is the time that I will hopefully get to spend just tying for pleasure. For a while at sea, I have found that I have gotten to spend the largest amount of any of my free time being able to tie a project for fun and for the education it brings to me and to those who show an interest aboard ship. I can add to that, the time to read the new books I picked up at the AGM and to watch the videos on the Guild's new DVD. This keeps in focus for me some of the true missions of the Guild, the propagation of education and true enjoyment of the Art of Knot Tying. With the new videos available on separate DVD discs and on the membership disc received in June, I hope the membership uses them for their enjoyment. But also, to actively hand them out to other individuals and groups, so that these missions are undertaken by all of the worldwide members and the Guild grows in numbers and recognition.

Board members have placed a lot of work and even more time into the tasks required to smoothly operate our organization and to disseminate all the information and literature that the Guild has to offer in a quick and timely manner, even with unforeseen interruptions. Our Hon. Secretary, Barry Mault, has had an unfortunate relapse of some medical issues. His unexpected stays in the hospital have given new challenges to the Ex. Board and all have graciously been covered. As we all probably know, recoveries can be slow and frustrating. So to Barry, and to anyone under the weather, we all wish Godspeed to a quick and complete recovery. At this time, I truly need to thank Bruce and Linda Turley for more than stepping up to help cover the arduous secretary tasks. Their passion for our International institution is to be highly praised and recognized by all. Again, I say to the both of you, Thank You.

Chairman Colin Byfleet has also taken charge in additional areas such as the upcoming half-year meeting. In his first year on the Ex. Board, he likewise has seen the need to have others oversee discrete tasks within the Guild. So with this introduction, I put forth to our members the request that everyone look to see if they have the time to help any member of the board with individual responsibilities or to undertake on the role of an officer.

Smooth turns
Dan Machowski

How I
Member

Dear Lindsey:

There has been much discussion of late regarding that most ancient of knots, the Bowline Knot and to the ways of tying it. This seems to have evolved along national lines. I suppose that, being an "end-insider" betrays my heritage, although I note that Clifford Ashley deprecated the "end-outside" method of tying it. Either method introduces a snag-factor and it probably depends on whether one needs a snag-free inside loop, or a snag-free outside loop which determines the method.

Ashley also notes the instability of the knot under certain circumstances and this can be readily demonstrated with Nylon, or Dacron rope. The method of tucking the end, proposed by A.H. Alston, certainly helps to secure the knot, but increases the "snagability", since the end now protrudes at ninety degrees.

Musing on these issues the other day, it occurred to me that it should be possible to tie a "one-way Bowline Knot" in much the same manner that one ties the "one-way Sheet Bend" and this did indeed prove to be remarkably simple. Tucking the end back up through the initial round-turn makes the knot more secure and reduces the "snag factor". If the end is kept short and seized to the standing part, then maximum security and minimum snagability are obtained.

This treatment may be applied to many Bowline Knot derivatives, including the French Bowline Knot, the Portugese Bowline Knot, the Double Bowline Knot (which has the same structure as the Portugese Bowline Knot with one collapsed loop), and Sister Loops, although in the last case it merely transfers the end from inside one loop to the outside of the other. Either version of the Bowline Knot may be tied in this manner the result being no more elegant one way than the other.

Sincerely,

John Heselton.

Did It
s tell all

C'mon then folks - John has opened up the knotting bag of ditties about how you have seen this before somewhere - now just where did I put my glasses? Let us hear your thoughts about how to finish a bowline loop in particular.

A 'Whymsical Muse' on the 'Age old Saying' 'How long is a piece of String'?

During November 2009 the oft spoken adjunct of - 'How Long is a Piece of String' cropped up in conversation and set me thinking about this curious 'Phrase'! Here are my thoughts! Can you add to the list?

But first let us remember our much loved and never to be forgotten Ex 'Goon Show' 'Comedian' – 'Spike Milligan' who famously said:

'A Piece of String is a very fine Thing' (or similar)

Initially one thinks in terms of an approximate 'Guess length' for the intended job without regard to how you are going to secure the 'End use' of the job in hand and even then you are not thinking intently of the 'knots, binding or lashing' that might be required! So it can be quite a simple or a very involved process and inevitably perhaps, 'An Off-cut length'!

Here are my 'Reflections' on this miscellany of thoughts. Can you think of any more?

1. From one end to the other. **2.** From 'Here to there'! **3.** A measured length.
4 . As long as you want it to be. **5.** A Cubit length (from elbow to tip of fingers!) Approximately 18 inches. **6.** Twice as long as the half of it!
7. The 'Span' length between your thumb and longest finger tip!
8. That long! This long! (Indicating with your hands, or other object length.)
9. Long enough for the job. **10.** A bit more or less than you thought you needed.
11 As far as the middle and back again! (Acknowledgement to friend J.Hart)
12 Four times the quarter of it! **13.** The right length. **14.** The wrong length.
15. As far as the middle and back again but what about the other half i.e. From the 'middle' to the other end. So in fact it could be 1½ times its length.
16. What was the length of that job I've got to do? I'll have to measure it again!
17. A bit more or less than you thought you needed. **18.** An estimated length!
19. The 'You'll never know length' until you take it into use.
20. The 'I know length', but you don't, because I'm the one doing the job.
21. The 'Knot' needed length because you have decided against it!
22. The wasted 'Offcut' length, that you keep but seldom re-use!
23. The 'I don't know length' because I haven't thought about the job yet.
24. The, 'I wish I had a piece of string' about 'this or that' long'?
25. The 'Near enough length' **26.** The 'That will do length.'
27. Any length will do as long as it's 'long enough'! for the job
28. The 'Never-ending' length of the single edge 'Moebius Band' of unknown circumference. **29.** The shortest length. **30.** The longest length.
31. Of no particular length at all because it is merely a 'Figure of Speech' to a seemingly intangible problem, question! It is amazing how many 'Variations on this Theme' there are along the indeterminate length of 'my' piece of 'String'.

"What about yours?

John Halifax

Dear Mr. Philpott,
Having been involved in Living History for many years, and particularly interested in rope- and cordage-making using authentic illustrations, woodcuts and diagrams, I have replicated a 1752 "rope machine" the only difference being the base which is made to disassemble quickly and efficiently for demonstrations utilizing and analyzing diary entries, historical documents and actual accounts of the workers and apprentices in the ropewalks of the 18th and early 19th centuries. [see center spread - Ed]

I have made available programming to schools, museums, organizations and historical sites such as and including The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, IL; Jamestown, VA; Mt. Vernon, VA; and Old Fort Noagara, Youngstown, NY.

I really enjoy Knotting Matters and always look forward to each copy, reading cover to cover, filing them and then re-reading them again. It is my sincere hope to be able to attend a North American meeting in the future. If you have any questions about my research, presentation or photos, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfuly,
Robert S. Galley
Wabash, IN, USA

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Address all inquiries to:
Robert & Penelope Galley
5021 W 300N • Wabash, Indiana 46992
~~(219)~~ 563-3275

A Personal Note

As both parents and grandparents in this era of plastics, batteries, and fast-pitched advertising, we have become increasingly aware that children today understand themselves and be allowed to return to the simple and uncomplicated. It is imperative they understand history is more than a page in a textbook. It is more than a happening somehow attached to a day and year. Real people with real names, real problems, concerns and triumphs forged the path we walk so freely today.

The best way to commemorate and interpret the past is to understand it. Perhaps we should all stop, think, and reflect a bit. We need to picture ourselves inside the cabins, minds, and hearts of those early settlers. We have to imagine their needs and wants. By doing so we can certainly expand our children's horizons and for us older folk perhaps revel in a bit of nostalgia.

Bob 'n' Penny

SOME BACKGROUND

Bob and Penny Galley have been involved in living history since 1974. Traveling throughout the United States and Canada, they have spent countless hours studying, researching and visiting small towns and big cities.

Born in Canada and raised on the Niagara Frontier, Bob has always had an avid interest in history. He began making wooden toys as a boy in his father's workshop and still continues today, reproducing replicas of those popular in the 18th and early 19th Century. Recently he has constructed a 1752 reproduction rope machine, using it as a back-drop for his interpretations.

Penny's strong educational background enables her to relate to audiences of all ages and her experience as mother and grandmother have given her an exceptional insight into the domestic lives of colonial women.

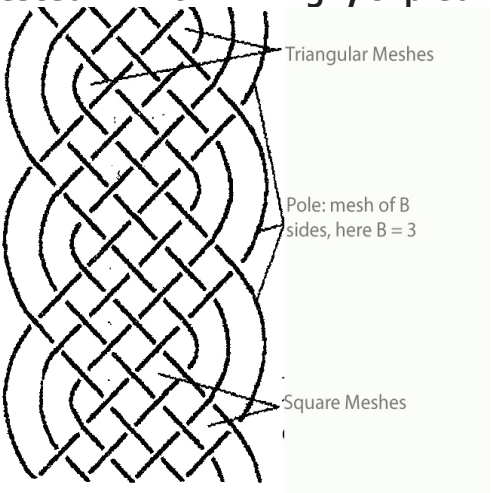
Together, Bob & Penny continue to use their extensive research as a basis for a wide range of presentations. Their primary focus is education and they continue to speak and demonstrate to thousands of school children, perform before numerous organizations, clubs, and special interest groups, as well as participate in many living history events across the United States each year.

The Knobs Take Shape

by Luc Prouveur
(translation provided by Europa Chang-Dawson)
This article first appeared in Sac de Noeuds #5

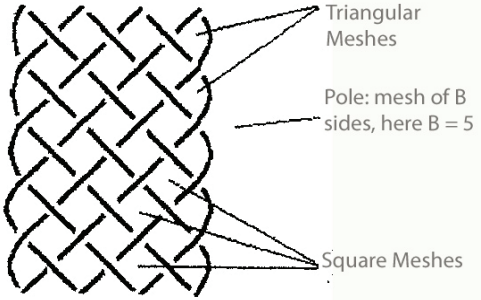
The knob knot of 18 facets and disc coverings made in the hand (from Sac de Noeuds #2 & #3) have a common point: the regular windings that are similar to nested Turk's-Head Knots (THKs). This family of THKs is particularly extensive and can lead to sometimes surprising results and unusual forms for Knob Knots tied 'in the hand'. First of all, let us look at a chart for a nested THK.

Nested THK of 10L X 3B, tripled



In keeping with normal THKs, the nested THK shows ***k*** parallel bights for each outer bight. The crossings of a nested THK show three types of mesh: those at the two poles have B sides, where B = the number of outside bights, they have 2 X B triangular meshes at the sides of the innermost bights (of the nested stack), and square meshes elsewhere.

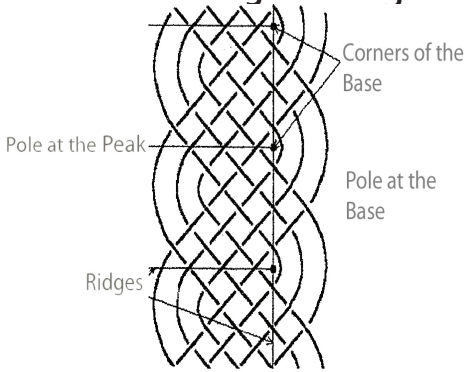
Normal 8L X 5B THK



A normal THK (see previous page, bottom) shows the same types of meshes, but for an identical perimeter; the number of bights at the poles (= ends) will be much greater as also the number of triangular meshes, which means the pol;es cannot be closed properly, nor the space neatly covered. So long as there are only 3 or 4 outer bights, the nested THK gives a neat closure at the poles, but as soon as the number of crossings increases beyond this {the number of crossings is equal to B X ***k*** X (L - ***k***) where L is the number of leads} the constraints which occur around the triangular meshes produce distortions that cause bumps, and tightening over a spherical core will no longer give good results.

The areas of square meshes give plane surfaces, the triangular meshes give peaks with ridges occurring along the edges of adjacent meshes. Making use of these properties it is possible to construct angular forms over solid cores such as a tetrahedron, cube, prism or pyramid. Depending on the number B of bights at the poles, these may be positioned at a peak, or in the middle of a polygonal face where the number of sides is equal to B (e.g. triangular for B = 3, square for B = 4).

Tetrahedron of 63 crossings



Therefore, a tetrahedron may be obtained from a nested THK where B = 3 such that there are 63 facets from 3 tripled bights and 10 leads, 108 facets from 3 quadrupled bights and 13 leads, or 165 facets from 3 bights in quintuplicate & 16 leads. One pole will be placed at the peak, the other in the middle of the base, the triangular meshes being at the centres of 3 faces & in the points of the base. Similarly, if B = 4, we get a cube. We may, for example, use the 96 facets of a 4-bight tripled (nested THK) with 11 leads, the 120 facets of a 4-bight tripled (nested THK) with 13 leads, or the 176 facets of a 4-bight quadrupled (nested THK) with 15 leads. The poles will be in the middle of two opposing faces, the triangular meshes positioned at the vertices of the cube.

Drawing inspiration from those examples, other forms may be discovered; in order to do so, we need to exploit the geometrical characteristics of different nested THKs.

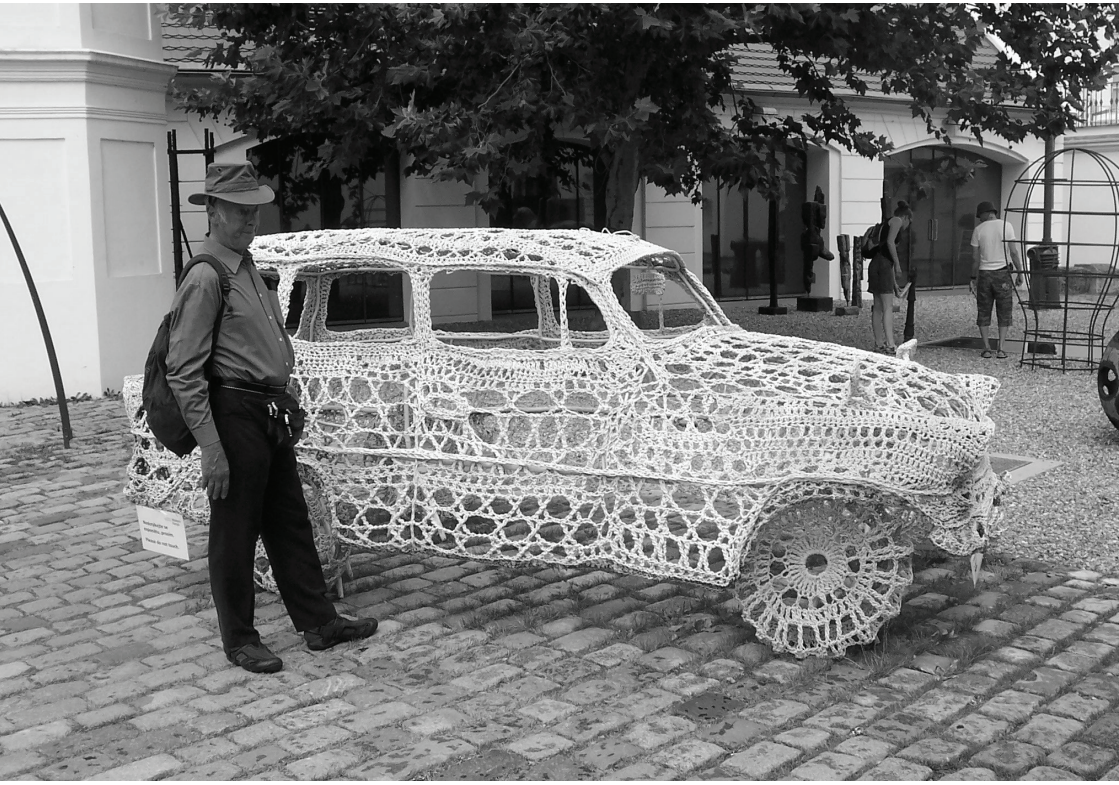
An extract from the Daily Telegraph of February 18, 2010:

Fred Cordier goes to work by bike. Unlike those people who pedal to keep fit or to do their bit to save the world, his motives are strictly down to earth. He is [?]

Okay - without looking up his profession in that issue of the DT, what do you think his profession is? There is a clue in his name....

Replies to the Editor please by November 1, 2010.

Dear Lindsey
We assume that the second pic is details of the creator, but sadly we don't speak or read Czech so cannot be sure. Very impressive! If anyone is visiting Prague and wishes to see it, it is displayed in the open air gallery to the left of the end of Charles Bridge.
Best wishes
Sheila and David Pearson



Jitka Havlíčková
Viktor - pomník automobilu
r.v. 2001 (předloha: Škoda Octavia combi typ 703 C , r.v.1967)
materiál: provaz, epoxidová pryskyřice, ocelová konstrukce,
rozměr: 410x 175x 153cm

[This is a car with very revealing lines, don't you think? Nah - they're probably just stringing us along!! Maybe it's supposed to be a coffin-nosed Auburn Cord automobile? Hit me with your best puns - Ed]

A rather lovely reminder from France of why we tie knots at our demonstrations and displays - these knots were all tied by children and other visitors at Douarnenez. Great idea and what a memento!

Yet more wizardry in cord by Joe Bennett - many thanks Joe! Keep 'em coming! Has anyone else tried these fascinating shapes yet?

A mat created on the day by sea ranger Ms. Bethany Haigh and assisted by IGKT member Bill Newey at the IGKT's Midlands branch demonstration at the National Sea Rangers regatta in Sutton Coldfield. Well done Bethany!

Robe
the r
New
2000
histo

Front view of the Old Infirmary at Fareham as visited recently in June by the Solent Branch. This site (background) formerly contained prison hulks [ships with no masts - Ed].

ert S. Galley of Wabash, IN, USA shows
making of rope at Abraham Lincoln's
Salem State Park to approximately
o adults and children each day in that
oric village setting for one week a year.

Extract from The 13 ½ Lives of Captain Bluebear

by Walter Moers ((C) 1999), translated by John Brownjohn ((C) 2000)

Knots are one of the most important aspects of a seaman's life. I don't mean the speed of a ship, which is also measured in knots, but the many ways of tying a hempen rope. I learned 723 different methods of tying a knot, and I know them all by heart to this day. I can (of course) tie an ordinary reef knot, but also a Minipirate's Double Skirtlet, a Storm Cravat, a Goose Gallows, a Hobgoblin Hitch - even a Double Gordian.

I mastered the Hempen Twist and the eight-strand Octopus Noose, the Buccaneer's Bowline and the Captin's Clinch. Blindfolded, I could tie two eels in a knot so complex that it would have taken them longer than a lifetime to disentangle themselves. Aboard the Minipirate's ship I became something in the nature of a senior knotmaster. Whenever a knot was needed, they came to me. I could tie a knot in a fish. I could even, in a dire emergency, tie a knot in a knot.

Roderick Orrah

10th November 2008
RODERICK ORRAH RECORDS SOME OF HIS LIFE AT SEA SHORTLY AFTER WORLD WAR TWO...(The End of an Era)
INTRODUCTION:-

In the Editorial to the "New Zealand Maritime News" (Volume 12 Number 2, 1993) D. F. Gardiner wrote about the necessity of recording our maritime past, particularly the role played by Seamen.

"*Seafaring men, those who have formerly been seafarers...have much to contribute in this regard, if they can be induced to put their reminiscences on record...*
They all have something to offer- seamen, waterside workers, harbour board and ship repair workers....
Another field which could yield a rich harvest of interesting and historically valuable information is that of cargo handling methods...
There is endless scope in a subject as fascinating as shipping and maritime history. The trouble is, of course, that so many people consider that their work, their experience and the things they know about are of little interest to anyone else.
But the everyday work of the everyday man is the very stuff of which history is made; it is important, and much of it as possible should be recorded, particularly so in times of galloping change such as we live in today."

It is in the spirit of D. F. Gardiner's challenging Editorial that we (New Zealand Branch, IGKT) record this story of one such Seaman, Roderick Orrah. [Ed – see some of Rod's work in KM 98, p 39]

RODERICK ORRAH : Seaman.

Roderick (Rod) Orrah, of Nelson, is a valued member of the New Zealand Chapter of the International Guild of Knot Tyers.

In this and the following articles he records his first trip as a Merchant Seaman; Memories of being a Crew Member on a Tramp Ship in the late 1940's; and A Later Trip to the Red Sea, Ceylon (Now Sri Lanka), India, Pakistan and America.

His time at sea coincides with the end of the era where ships were loaded and discharged with ship board derricks and winches and the holds were loaded and discharged largely by hand. It precedes the era of the roll-on-roll-off ships and the use of containers. It was a time when a sailor would be away from home for long periods and where they often were in a port or on the coast of New Zealand for months at a time.

MY FIRST TRIP:

It was on the 16th June 1947, when I was 17, that I traveled up to Middlesbrough and signed onto the "SS ANGLO INDIA", a cargo or tramp ship belonging to Smiths of Cardiff. I had just completed three months of training on the "TS: VINDICATRIX", at Sharpness, Gloucester. It was a shore-based establishment, and as I had grown up in a country village, I had never been at sea. So it was with some excitement and also trepidation, when I went aboard the "Anglo Indian", which was lying at Smith's dry dock, at South Bank on the river Tees.

We sailed on the 19th June 1947 on a lovely summers day and headed across the North Sea for Rotterdam in Holland. I was lucky and got away on this first trip as a Junior Ordinary Seaman, which was better money than being a Deck Boy. My wage was twelve pounds ten shillings per month and found (food, bed and some kit), which was good money for those days.
By 1947, conditions on most British ships were not too bad, but on some they were still primitive. The days of the 'Donkeys Breakfast' (Straw palliasse / mattress) had just finished and most of the ships with open foc'sles (forecastles) were gone, although I did spend four months on a molasses tanker, the "SS: Scottish Heather" in 1948 and we lived fo'ard (forward) in an open foc'sle.

The "Anglo Indian" was a bit more modern and we lived aft with four bunks to a cabin. Washing facilities were not too good, having a shower stall with no shower or hand basins. We were issued with a galvanized bucket and all personal washing and laundry had to be done in the bucket. Two sheets, three blankets, and a counterpane were standard issue in those days. The sheets having to be washed in the bucket when they got too grubby. The food was good and generally the conditions weren't too bad, even though the black 'S' on the funnel was said to stand for: "Sails on Saturdays and Sundays, Slavery and Starvation."

Quite a few Shipping Lines had earned themselves reputations amongst seamen, as good ships to keep clear of. The British Tanker Company in those days had the letters 'B.T.C. on their funnels. These letters were said to mean: "That better Times Were Coming"! The Baron Line was known as: " Hungry Hogarths". There was quite a good ditty about the Baron Line, but unfortunately I can only remember a couple of lines of it:

"First of all we oil the decks,
And then begin to chip,
But we always leave a little bit behind
In case there's none next trip!"

Oiling and chipping the decks was a regular job on any tramp ship. Another line that had earned the reputation for meanness was Harrison's of Liverpool, and they were known as: "Two of fat and One of lean", because they had two white stripes and one red strip on the funnel. They were also known as the line that seagulls never followed!
Having digressed a little, I will now return to my first trip. It took only a day to get to Rotterdam and although I felt a little squeamish when we got to sea, I was never sea sick and indeed was never sick in at all in the quarter of million miles I have been on the water.
At Rotterdam, we loaded coal for Savona in Italy. This took about a week, so we were able to get ashore and have a look around. Most ships tie up to buoys which are called 'Dolphins' in Rotterdam, so we had to get ashore by rowboat. When the coal was all loaded, the hatches were battened down and the derricks lowered and then we were off down the North Sea and through the English Channel, keeping to well defined channels, as in 1947 there were still a lot of minefields around. They had been laid in the Second World War and hadn't been cleared yet.

In the English Channel at that time, there was still plenty of evidence of the war, with quite a lot of wrecks about, their masts still sticking above the water. When we got down the English Channel, we turned on a more southerly course at Cape Ushant, to cross the Bay of Biscay. This Bay has a reputation for bad weather, but this trip was kind to us. On another ship in 1951, I did see it live up to its reputation. It was on a ship called the "HARTLEPOOL" (Harrison's of London), and we were on a voyage from Antwerp to Venice in January, when we ran into a storm in the Bay.

The sea was white with the fury of the wind and during the night we were crossing, an oil tanker called the "JANCO", broke in two and several of the crew were drowned. We were one of the ships to answer the SOS call, but weren't the first to get there, so didn't really take part in the rescue operation. The two halves of the tanker were still floating when we got there, and they were a reminder to me now, that this was the most vicious storm that I ever saw during my time at sea.

On the voyage to Savona, I was initiated to the workings of a cargo ship at sea. Watchkeeping and maintenance were the two main concerns, so I learnt to steer in my own time and this got me onto a regular watch after we left Egypt. Four men comprised a watch on deck.: The Mate; Wheelman; Lookout; and a standby man whose job was mainly errand boy for the Mate, who never left the bridge during his four-hour watch. Four hours on and eight off were being worked when I went to sea. The Dogwatches were not worked on merchant ships at the time. So if you drew the 8-12 when you left port, you were changed to 4-8 or 12-4.

The duties on a watch consisted of 2 hours on the wheel, an hour on lookout, and an hour on standby. During the hour on standby, you made the tea, read the Log for the Mate (this was a speed indicator, which usually streamed aft of the ship), and called the relieving watch, taking their breakfast or dinner aft for them.

One often had to check the hatches for the Mate when in bad weather, as the wedges used to secure them often got knocked out by the heavy seas as they came aboard when the ship rolled. The standby duty was known as the "Farmer" when you were on the 12pm-4am watch. In the morning you also cooked the breakfast for the watch, before turning in, so you could sleep straight through until 11:30 instead of having to get up for breakfast at 8am. To get your breakfast left out, you had to keep on the right side of the cook, and you usually had to clean his fires out for him in the Galley, so that he could get up a to a good hot stove, first thing in the morning.

Maintenance during the day was usually washing the decks or the paintwork, known as 'Sooging', also oiling or greasing the running gear, or renewing any of the running gear which wasn't safe. This is where I learnt to splice wire rope as well as ordinary rope. I also learnt to tie knots and hitches. This interest I have kept up to this day. During good weather, there was always painting going on, so I got a good grounding in painting which stood me in good stead since I have been in New Zealand, seeing as we have always lived in wooden houses that have had to be painted regularly! I also learnt to tie myself off on a Bosun's Chair, so I helped paint the masts and funnel, when I was able to lower myself. In port the hull was often painted, so having to rig a stage and work on it was also part of a seaman's job.

It was good to reach Savona and stretch my legs, and being my first trip I always found foreign ports very interesting, because the main reason I went to sea was to see the world. Geography and especially the map of the world always having a special interest for me.

With all the coal discharged we left Italy for Port Said in Egypt. Seeing as we were going to load salt, all the holds had to be washed out and cleaned, so it was a busy week before arriving in Port Said. We went down the coast of Italy and through the Straits of Messina, between Italy and Sicily. The weather was quite hot by this time and I remember taking my shirt off and trying to get brown. I stayed in the sun too long and instead of getting brown, I got badly burnt. Of course the weather in England when I was growing up, never really got hot enough for taking off your shirt, but I should have known better and not stayed out so long on my first attempt to get sun tanned! Egypt I was really looking forward to, having heard about it from the men who had come back from the war. I was disappointed though, finding it dirty and with flies galore. Also when you were ashore you were continuously pestered with beggars and hangers-on who were always wanting to take you to see the sights of town and they wouldn't leave you alone.

Of all the places in the world that I visited, I consider Egypt and the North American Coast ports to be the worst. They look nice from the sea, but it's a different story when you get ashore. After loading the salt, using our own derricks and winches, we set off down the Suez Canal. The Canal was quite a fascination to me on my first trip, although there wasn't a lot to see, except sand on either side most of the way.

After passing through the Bitter Lakes we then sailed down the lower half of the Canal and dropped the Pilot at Port Suez. We also had to drop a search light which is always fitted on the bow of every ship for night sailing through the Canal, and also two rowing boats and their crews which are always loaded at the beginning of every Canal trip in case you have to tie up in the Canal due to a sand storm or to let a North bound convoy to pass. The Canal is quite wide enough for two ships to pass, providing one of them is tied up to the bank.
Having just learnt to steer, I didn't get a turn of the wheel on this trip, but later on, on other ships, I had plenty of opportunity to steer through the Canal. In fact, I have been through the Canal over twenty times and I think that my crowning glory came one night when I had just taken over the wheel and the Pilot came in and asked me if I had been through the Canal before. I said: "Yes, several times", so he said: "Keep her down the middle then", which I did and he never said another word to me for the next two hours.

Leaving Suez, we set sail for Japan, Kobe being the port. It was very hot down the Red Sea and Aden. At Singapore, we bunkered en-route. On this trip nobody got ashore in these ports due to the fact that we were there for only a few hours, but I saw these ports later on, when on another ship. It took us five weeks to get to Japan where we discharged the salt. Although we were lying at anchor in Kobe harbour we still managed to get ashore on several occasions. Fish and rice seemed to be the staple diet of the stevedores working the cargo and we used to wash the decks down regularly to try to get rid of the smell.

Money was a problem in Japan, so selling cigarettes was our main source of income. There was still an Army of Occupation there in 1947, mainly American, and we had armed guards on the ship at all times. We got to know some of these guards and we met them ashore and they would take us to the PX Store, which had everything in the way of food and other shopping goods. With the money that I got from cigarettes, I remember buying a good watch which lasted me for years, also a tea set with a picture of a Geisha Girl's head which was in the porcelain at the bottom of each cup. My niece, Deborah Haycock, still has it in England.
The Japanese traders were said to be reliable and trustworthy and this proved to be so. I brought the tea set 12,000 miles, having seen only a sample of what I was buying. When I opened the box two and a half months later, I found it all there and in perfect condition.
Once the salt was discharged, it was up anchor and we headed across the North Pacific to America. Incidentally, it was on the "Anglo Indian" I had to do one of the worst jobs I've ever had to do in my life...

We only had shallow cable lockers (where the anchor cable or chain was kept), not the deep, self-stowing ones, so every time the anchor was weighed, it had to be stowed manually. This was a hard, dirty job, as well as being dangerous. The muds from the bottom of the harbours of the world do not smell nice, even though most of it was washed off before it got to us (this washing is done by high pressure hoses directed at the cables as they come aboard). There was always consternation if you knew you were to be on watch when the anchor was raised.
Before leaving Japan there was a little incident that is worth recording, seeing that I have lived in New Zealand since 1956. I was night watchman in Kobe, so the only time that I got ashore was during the day. Kobe is quite a big city and one day I wandered off the beaten track and got lost! Then I saw what I thought was a British Army truck coming along, so I flagged it down and asked the driver if he could point me in the direction of the docks. He said: "Get in, and I'll take you there!" He turned out to be a New Zealander in the Army of Occupation and I have often wondered who he was and where he lived in New Zealand.

It took three weeks to cross the Pacific and we had to wash out the holds to get rid of all the salt that had been left in all the cracks and crevasses, but having three weeks to do it, there was no rush. Our first port of call was Coos Bay in Oregon and we tied up in a little hamlet, called Empire. There we started to load sawn timber (Oregon Pine) for London. There I saw the American way of working and was very impressed with the way they got things done. They did have the machinery for it though.

To finish off loading we went to Portland and there I saw a big city for the first time which had never seen any shortages during the war. Everybody seemed to have their own car, which was totally different from England. Even in 1947, America was a nation that was loosing its legs, because they could drive to most things even then, pictures; banks etc.

When the cargo was eventually loaded, we had ten feet of deck cargo and this had to be fastened down with chains and stenhouse clips. The deck cargo caused quite a problem when you had to move along the decks. With derricks dropped and all the running gear stowed away in the mast houses, we sailed for England. This trip was to take five weeks and before getting there, we stopped at San Pedro in California for bunkers (fuelling up) and we also had to go through the Panama Canal. This was a great thrill to me, because it is a great engineering feat. There are three sets of locks on the way: "Gatun"; "Pedro Miguel"; and "Miraflore". The locks could handle most of the big ships of the day, but are probably not big enough to handle the super-tankers which are around today. The locks are in pairs so that one ship is being raised, another is being lowered. The ships are held firmly in the locks by wires which are attached to tractors which move along the side of the locks. They are called: "Mules", and are remarkable machines and making locking, in and out, easier.

Once through the Canal, it was non-stop to London, the only land being seen on the way was when we went through the Mona Passage between the islands of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. The trip was uneventful with reasonable weather, and a well stowed cargo of timber is always a good cargo to have. When we picked up the Lizard Light off the South West corner of England, everybody started to get excited as they thought we would pay-off in a couple of days. This was not to be, because after we picked up the Thames Pilot at Dungeness, which is on the South East Coast of England, and in the English Channel, we sailed on by the White Cliffs of Dover and had just altered course into the Thames itself , when the fog came down and we finished up lying off Southend Pier for three days waiting for it to lift. Fogs in England in November are real pea-soupers and nothing can move. The fog certainly dampened our spirits, but eventually we moved up-river, and the Mud Pilot came on board and locked us into one of the London Docks.

The Articles of the Trip were then declared closed after we had tied up, and then it was just a case of packing our bags and waiting around for the money to come on board, so we could pay off. Discharge books were given out and everybody was pleased to get: "Very Good". We had a good crew though, so no bad discharges were given this trip. When asked by the Mate whether we would like to come back next trip, all the deck crew declined, as very few men ever did two trips on the same Tramp Ship. The saying was: "One Trip, One Ship." With money and discharge books in our pockets, we called for a taxi and headed for Kings Cross station to get a train home. In my case, this was in the North of England.

All this was before my 18th birthday, so I felt quite pleased with myself, having been around the world before I was eighteen. It was a great experience, but it was still good to be home.

Roderick Orrah
Nelson
New Zealand. [abbreviated part 2 next time - Ed]

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND LETTERS

Dear Members

Half Yearly Meeting of the IGKT 2010 – Karlskrona, Sweden Oct 9th/10th, 2010

In the two pages which follow this letter, you will find the details of this meeting with some suggestions from the local organiser, Nisse Gustavsson, about travel and accommodation.
The council apologise for this information not being available for the last Knotting Matters, but, as you may know, our Secretary, Barry Mault, has been indisposed with a serious 3-week hospitalisation which will be followed by a lengthy period of convalescence. He is progressing well, but is still very tired and weak.

As you may imagine, this has caused some delays to our organisation of events. Bruce Turley and I are dealing with the urgent matters.

To simplify things for the Karlskrona meeting, please send all correspondence about participation to me (email colin@byfleet.org, tel +44 (0)1769 450 626, mail Oaken Cleave, Cobbaton, Umberleigh, EX37 9SG, UK) and I will liaise with Nisse. To go on the trip to the Naval Yard you will need to let us have your date and place of birth, for security purposes.

Please bring any displays or work in progress which you can manage to transport to Karlskrona, there will be display space available.
My wife and I are booked in from Friday and we look forward to meeting many of you in October.

Very best wishes for good knotting.
Colin
Dr Colin Byfleet
IGKT Supplies Secretary and Council Chairman

IGKT half-yearly meeting at Karlskrona, Sweden 9-10 October 2010

Organised by Marinmuseum, Karlskrona and IGKT Swedish branch. The Museum is kindly sponsoring the refreshments for the meeting and the dinner on Saturday, with initial drinks. There will be a bar and music after the dinner.

October 8th - Friday afternoon
A small room is available for us and will be available, as well as the Meeting Hall until 1700 (that's 5 pm) in the Museum. (This will then be closed until 11:00 am on Saturday.

Saturday October 9th

Check in 0800-0900, set up displays in Meeting Hall. Please let me (colin@byfleet.org) know the number of tables required.	
09:00-09:15	Walking to the old shipyard at the naval base NB Date and place of birth will be required in advance for security. Send e-mail to (colin@byfleet.org)
09:15-10:30	Guided tour old shipyard and the ropewalk
10:45-11:00	Walking back to the Museum for Coffee/tea
11:00-11:30	Welcome speech by Rickard Bauer, Museum Director followed by IGKT meeting.
11:30-12:00	Displays/workshops
Saturday Afternoon	
12:00-13:00	Lunch in Skeppsgossens Restaurant
13:00-16:00	Displays/workshops open to public
15:00	Coffee, tea and biscuits
16:00-19:00	Workshops / spare time
19:00-21:00	Sponsored dinner with invited guests
21:00-24:00	Pub evening with music

Sunday October 10th

09:00 -10:00	Guided tour of sloop & Barkassskjulet Jarramas: Bremön: Västervik: Hangar
10:00-11:00	Guided tour of Marine Museum
11:00	Coffee & tea
11:00-12:00	Workshops
12:00-13:00	Lunch and farewells to those departing
13:00-14:00	Workshops Sunday fun for families with children
14:00/15:30	Workshops for those who are still present. Museum closes at 16:00.

Some members may have to leave earlier: but we hope you will be able to stay to the end.
For Marinmuseum and IGKT Swedish branch
Rigging Master Nisse Gustavsson

IGKT Half-yearly meeting Oct 9/10 2010 at the Marinmuseum, Karlskrona, Sweden

Reaching Karlskrona is easy by air to Copenhagen and then train to Karlskrona. By car to Malmo and then on the E22.

Nisse Gustavsson has provided this list of hotels and hostels nearby the Museum on Trosso Island no more than max 10 minutes walk from the Museum on Stumholmen Island. Sweden's dialing code is +46 (eg 0046 from UK). Do not dial the 0 in front of the 455 local code when dialing from abroad.

Karlskrona Trossö Youth Hostel Drottninggatan 39
371 32 Karlskrona Telephone 0455-100 20 Online booking (I can vouch that this is easy, my wife and I used their system).
For general matters of booking and reservation via: trosso.vandrarhem@telia.com
Booking.com/Karlskrona-Hotell

Clarion Collection Hotell Carlskrona www.choicehotels.no - 0455-36 15 00
Hotel Conrad www.hotelconrad.se - 0455-36 32 00
Hotell Aston www.hotellaston.se - 0455-194 70
Hotell Siesta hotellsiesta.com – 0455-801 80
First Hotell Statt firsthotels.com/sv/ - 0455-555 50
First Hotell Ja firsthotels.com/sv - 0455-555 60
Scandic Hotel www.scandichotels.se/Karlskrona - 0455 37 20 00
New hotel in the middle of the city
Prislista Dragsö Stugby 2010Utskriftsvänlig sida

Beskrivning		Period Low Season Rate
Cottages:		Jan 1 - June 4, Aug 21 - Dec 24
2 bed	Day/week	400/2400
4 bed	Day/week	500/3000
4+2 bed	Day/week	750/4500
Lux. cot.	Day/week	950/5700
Double	Day/week	350/2000
Triple	Day/week	495/3000
Björkholmen:		
16A, 3+1	Day/week	550/3600
16B, 3+1	Day/week	500/3200
18, 3+1	Day/week	550/3600
7A, 4+2	Day/week	750/4500
7B, 4+2	Day/week	750/4500

Dragso Camping cottage with 2-4 beds 3,8 km from the museum
Dragsö Camping & Holiday Village.
Dragsövägen, 37137 Karlskrona, 0455-15354 info@dragso.se

Sir,
Having been a member for some years now and a keen reader of our magazine , I never thought that I would ever be able to contribute a comment !
However , on seeing the item on issue 107 about the Farrimond Hitch it suddenly dawned on me that it is the same hitch I was taught many years ago whilst working at an outdoor camp in the Appalachian Mountains , USA. I spent several seasons leading young people hiking in those hills and, as we had to sleep always under tarps, the knot I was taught was called a " Taut Line Hitch ". It was adjustable and could be used to tighten or slacken the line and bears a very similar resemblance to what you are calling a Farrimond Hitch !
If I only ever make one contribution to your magazine in my lifetime can this be it !
Kind regards,
Nigel Rowe
England.

From: Robert Chisnall
To: knottingmatters@igkt.net
Sent: Thursday, July 29, 2010 10:54 PM

Dream Knots

Summertime brings out the movie blockbusters, and Christopher Nolan (of "Memento," "Batman Begins" and "The Dark Knight" fame) has contributed to the 2010 crop of action flicks. Starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Canada's Ellen Page, "Inception" is a unique mind-bender, albeit somewhat derivative. It's a mix of "Mission Impossible" meets "The Matrix" meets "What Dreams May Come." With startling visual effects, the plot is a bit too complex for summer popcorn fare - try keeping track of four levels of dreams! - and there are several logical misfits and plot holes you can drive a truck through sideways. Wait a minute . . . This isn't supposed to be a movie revue. I wanted to talk about knots.

Yes, numerous knots figure throughout the flick. Although, if you blink, you may miss a few. Said knots are associated with a silly rappelling sequence and an even more unrealistic climbing/falling set piece. (Hollywood never seems to be able to get that stuff right.) Keep an eye out for what looks like a Fisherman's Bend tied to a chair leg as a rappel anchor. (Of course this is a standard anchor for any experienced abseiler!) There are several Figure Eight End Loops, with frayed ends improperly tucked. (See KM: The Security of Bowlines and Figure Eight Loops as Harness Tie-Ins: The Principles of Pre-Knotting, Post-Knotting and Concatenation, Part 1, No, 90, March 2006, Part 2, No. 91, June 2006.) There's also a Monkey's Fist. Also featured are what appear to be Bowlines, or perhaps Ring or Stopper Bowlines, without Keeper Knots. But watch closely. The editing is fast and the shots zip by pretty quickly. (I'm aiming to rent the DVD release when it comes out so I can pause the picture and attempt to do a more accurate identification.)

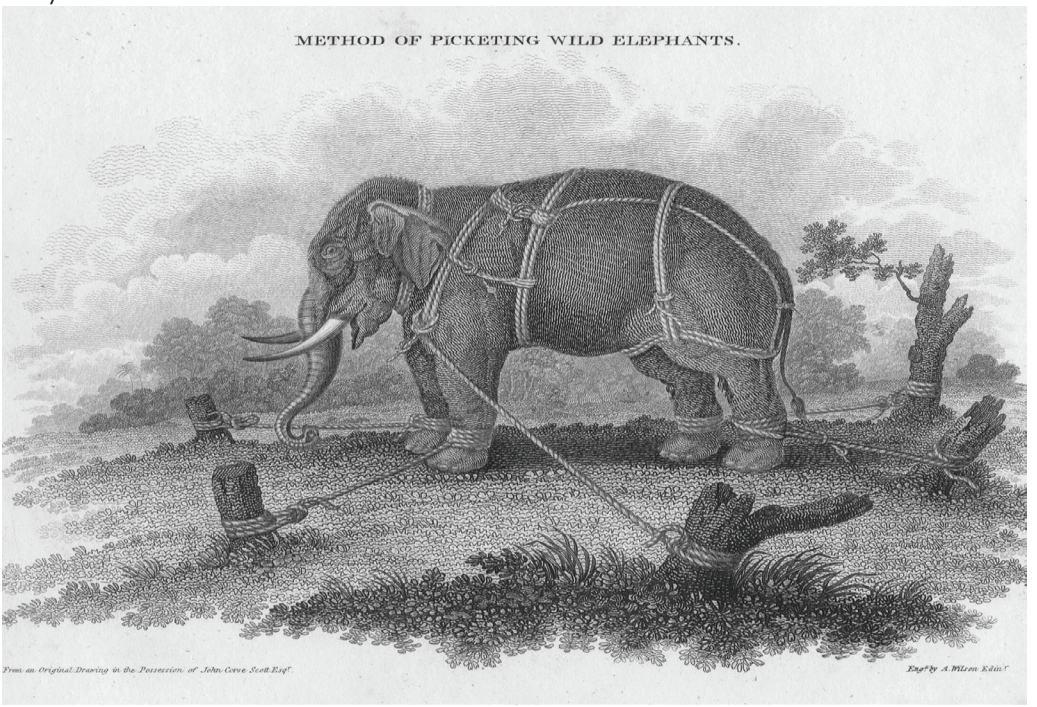
Of the many movies I've watched - films are another passion of mine - this one seems to at least present knots somewhat accurately. Other flicks - like "Mission Impossible II," "The Eiger Sanction," "Cliffhanger," "Vertical Limit," "Entrapment," and several wilderness adventure and heist movies often depict knots unrealistically or in rather sloppy or creative ways. (How many times have you witnessed knots slowly slip undone at critical points in the action?) Check out "Three Days in August" (I think that's the title) and "Seven Years in Tibet." The former is the most accurate fictional depiction I've seen of period knots and climbing techniques. "Seven Years in Tibet" tries hard to be historically accurate, but that movie is rife with many anachronisms. (Watch for the Prusik Knot/Hitch sequence, and keep an eye out for the nylon rope and figure eight descender - then think about when these items were invented and came into regular use.)

The "Inception" plot may be an illusory Gordian Knot to unravel, but there are other real-life knots scattered throughout. Have fun at the movies!

Rob Chisnall

And in the SouthWest, from Richard Hopkins:

As someone who is interested in practical knotting, I feel that this project seems to be full of technical problems. How would the team prevent the head end moving? Trained elephants were sometimes used, tied to stand next to wild elephants, but the illustration gives no clues - any ideas?



A Poem

The Anniversary Knot

Long ago a knot was tied
In the form of a husband and wife
A simple bend that joined the ends
Of the lines of two people's lives

Now a knot may fail in the gales
Of life's most turbulent seas
Or a knot may seize, breaking the lines
Of lives more at war than at peace

But this knot grew, as the people did too
Into a thing of beauty to see
More mat than bend as the ends turned in
Weaving one life from two is the key

Douglas J. Peeso

Credit goes to my Aunt Karen and Uncle Leon Austin whose fiftieth wedding anniversary was June 25, 2010. The poem was presented in a frame with a six bight mat tied with silver and gold elastic thread suspended just below the poem. I was inspired to write this poem from that event. I hope you enjoy it.
Douglas

A Letter from a Member

Dear Editor:

In answer to Richard Hopkins' comment on page 17 of KM #105, it may interest him and our readers that GRG Worcester wrote five (5) books on Yangtze River Craft, those being:

"**Junks and Sampans of the Upper Yangtze**" as he noted,
"**Notes on the Crooked Bow and Crooked Stern Junks of Szechwan**" (the vessels could be hauled by teams of 'trackers' with the towing rope at quite an acute angle from the fore and aft line of the junk, which would keep a straight course without use of a rudder) then there were **Volumes 1 & 2**
"**Junks and Sampans of the Yangtze**" as Richard also noted. The fifth was the description of his adventures, trials and tribulations while collecting all the information for the foregoing books.

In 1971 the US Naval Institute at Annapolis, MD published the Volumes 1 & 2 in one volume - an outstanding example of the publishers' art, a copy of which is one of the most treasured 'members' of my library - and it was from this that I quoted in KM #76 - its title is simply, "**The Junks and Sampans of the Yangtze**"

Another interesting use of bamboo in Asian vessels are fishing rafts of Vietnam - these 2-man sailing rafts consist of 18 bamboo poles, lashed together with the forward end bent up with heat to create a bow [stem]. They are lashed together with what Tim Severin describes as 'strips of bamboo skin and lengths of rattan, both of which are boiled in lime to preserve and make supple.' These rafts fish well off shore daily and are carried out of the water each night. They are re-lashed every three (3) months.

The sixty (60)-foot raft that Tim Severin had built, and is described in his book "China Voyage" was of two-hundred twenty (220) bamboo poles with two thousand (2000) lashings, mainly of rattan of roughly a pencil's diameter, split longitudinally. The shrouds of the three (3) junk-rigged masts were of three (3)-ply rattan, laid up. This remarkable vessel was afloat permanently for six (6) months and sailed five and one half (5500) thousand miles before it began to seriously disintegrate. A tribute to bamboo and to nature's cordage!

Roger Carter
PS Bamboo rafts are (were?) used on Taiwan and the West Coast of India - the Kattumaran - from whence came the Western yachties' "catamaran"!

Branch Lines

Please join us in welcoming the latest Chapter/Section of the North American Branch - The Knot In The Middle.

Tying the Knot in the Middle …

Metaphorically that is. After a great deal of talk, thought and planning, a small group of IGKT members have finally launched a local chapter of the IGKT-NAB. Located in the Midwest in Central Indiana (USA), we have chosen to be known as the Knot in the Middle Chapter. That seems only fitting for a Chapter so completely landlocked that there is no navigable waterway to the rest of the world for hundreds of miles.

Fear of a lack of interest and poor attendance was enough to stifle our efforts and desires for more than a year. After all, no one enjoys failure. The Half Yearly Guild Meeting in New Bedford would change all that. Even so, it still took five months to actually get it set, but the excitement and momentum stimulated by attending the IGKT Half-Yearly Meeting was clearly the push that finally got it done. Shortly after the meeting, inspired by the enthusiasm of those we met from around the globe, we made the decision to move forward even with our fears.

Word of mouth, emails and postings on Knotting web sites and Facebook Knotting groups were all utilized to get the word out. Most helpful was the information posted on the IGKT-NAB homepage by Guild member Don Burrhus. In retrospect, the biggest hurdle in communication was to get the date and location set. Right or wrong, we finally had that done. We were committed. Would anyone show up?

The Inaugural organizational meeting was planned for Sunday, March 7th just after the conclusion of the annual Marlinspike Skills Weekend. As many of you know, that is an adult training weekend of the Crossroads of America Council, Boy Scouts of America. It is devoted to teaching useful and unusual decorative knots to Scouters in order to empower them to use the skills learned to challenge and reward the Scouts they serve.

Equipped with no set agenda other than to explore where and when we would meet and how we would structure the ongoing meetings, we were in for a big surprise. Our fear of only 3 or 4 attendees was soon quashed. We are pleased to say that we met 17 strong. These 17 are now all members of the IGKT and gathered from not only the central Indiana area, but also from approximately a 2-hour drive from the North, South, East and West of Indianapolis. Special circumstances even provided attendees from California and Maryland!

We will be moving forward with scheduled quarterly meetings and plan to produce a small email-based newsletter each quarter and after each meeting as well. Our meetings for the remainder of 2010 will be held in the Community Room of the Nora Public Library on the North side of Indianapolis from 1 to 4pm on Sundays, May 23rd, August 29th and November 28th. For information and the address of the meeting location, please contact Rusty Helms (Rusty@HelmsCPA.com). All Guild members from any and all chapters and branches are welcome. The attendees at the meeting were: Denise Purdie-Andrews, Patrick Glisson, Jim Wolf, Joe Bates, Gary Summers, Paul Zimmerman, John Waidner, Dave Largent, John DeWilde, Eric Wickizer, Brian O'Neal, Keith Kohanzo, Mark Delaney, Chris Sparks, and Steve Lawrence. Rusty Helms (also Lily Morales for support).

Midlands Branch

On 10 July the Midlands branch was invited to put on a drop-in centre for the National Sea Rangers regatta at Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield. This event was attended by approximately 150 Sea Rangers. The members of the Midlands Branch assisting with this event were Bill Newey, Patrick O'Reilly, Nick Jones, Peter Hennessy and myself, Bruce Turley. The day started at nine o'clock in the morning with myself and Patrick instructing and helping all the girls to try a friendship knot in their neckerchiefs. After this, when the rest arrived at the appointed time, we set up the stand which consisted of two rope-making machines, and a variation on the Six Knot Challenge, adapted to suit the knots tied by the Sea Rangers (which meant we dropped the sheepshank and replaced it with a figure of eight knot). This was very well supported by the Sea Rangers and a number of their leaders. Unfortunately, I forgot to make a note of the fastest time when I gave the list to the organiser, enabling her to present the winners with special certificates signed by Barry Mault, although all of the people who participated received a certificate with their time on. During the course of the day we tied numerous monkeys fist keyrings (which was very popular), dragonflies and numerous other bits of rope work. One of the largest projects undertaken was a rope mat measuring 12" x 16" high in 12 mm staple polypro. **[see center pages - Ed]** This was tied by Bethany Haigh, one of the senior Sea Rangers, and Bill Newey using a jig of his own design. It took them nearly 2 1/2 hours! The finished mat consisted of 106 crossovers and was doubled. The finishing ends were spliced to finish the mat. It was given to Bethany for use at her crew's headquarters. The day was extremely enjoyable for all who participated and the time seemed to fly past. Before we knew it, it was time to start packing up, although we still had people wanting to tie knots with us.

Bruce Turley
Midlands Branch

Patron Saints (according to our UK Stringer)

The legendary St. Catherine of Alexandria (not to be confused with at least six others {St. Catherine of Bologna, Genoa, Siena, etc.}) is, because of the torture wheel emblematic in art about her, supposed to be the patron saint of rope makers (and other deserving souls). But, although she has an annual feast day on the 25th of November, there is no credible evidence that she really existed outside of ancient Greek tales written about her martyrdom.
Someone less nebulous is Saul of Tarsus (latterly St. Paul), the tradesman's saint of missionaries and rope-makers. Celebrate his feast day on the 29th of June each year.

Pacific Americas Branch

Lindsey Philpott arrived at my home about 8:00 AM on Friday the 18th. He and I transferred the Branch collection of knots into his Prius and we set off for San Francisco. It was a long, but pleasant drive, as we were able to discuss many knotty subjects (some even pertinent to the Guild?). After checking in to our hotel, Lindsey contacted the Bosch family and plans were made to meet at a local brewery/restaurant. Lori and Karin Bosch (Bob & Sue's daughters) joined us and we had a very pleasant evening talking branch business, knot silliness, and other important things.

We arrived on Treasure Island about 10:00 am on the 19th and contacted Arian Paul (event coordinator) for directions to our "booth". We had a very nice setup, a large canopy (about 15' x 15') and they set up a "wall" on one side to protect us from the strong wind that was evident all day. J.D. Lentzen (JD~TIAT) joined us and we were able to set him up with his own table where he spent the day with folks lined up to see and learn how to tie his "fusion knots".

Then Mr. Joe Soanes joined us. Joe is a member of the PAB, who has moved up to the San Francisco area, so we haven't seen him in some time. Joe visited with us and demonstrated knots for a couple of hours, then had to head on back home. We all were very happy to have the opportunity to visit with Joe again.

And, of course, the dinner crew was there. Lindsey, Bob, Sue, Lori, Karin, and me. We had eight people representing the Pacific Americas Branch of the International Guild of Knot Tyers, and we were all busy showing, teaching and answering questions about, our passion (well, one of our passions) for knots. One of the biggest draws (almost as big as JD) was letting the kids make rope. Making rope from twine is one of the most popular things we do at nearly every event we attend, and the kids get to keep the rope they make, which pleases them greatly!

We had very little "down time", as there was a pretty good crowd there all day long. One of the event items was a boat building contest. Folks started about 8:30AM building their boat and about 5:00PM they were putting them in the water. There was a race and, wouldn't you know it, the "man powered" boat won. (The two men paddled like crazy!)

At the end of the day, Ms. Paul came by our booth and apologized for the small crowd. Said the weather probably kept them away. I responded with, "If we had seven more people visit our booth, we would not have been able to handle it!"

I want to sincerely thank and acknowledge Bob, Sue, Lori, & Karin as they were the folks responsible for putting us in touch with Ms. Paul in the first place. And, on a long shot, I let JD know about the event, hoping he would at least visit us. He ended up spending all day working the crowd. Joe Soanes - what can I say? We were all very happy to visit with Joe again. All of the pictures I took at the Sailstice may be seen at . . . http://picasaweb.google.com/igktpab/100619SummerSailstice.

Karin Bosch also took pictures, and they may be seen at . . . http://www.snapfish.com/snapfish/shareereg/p=7772012770922119 11/l=5847490016/g=138729174/cobrandOid=1000/otsc=SYE/otsi=SAIS/pns/snapfish/share/p=7772012770922119 11/l=5847490016/g=138729174/cobrandOid=1000/otsc=SYE/otsi=SAIS;jsessionid=50D0970A2013DCB976EA93BD3E01852E.

Solent Branch

Headstall with Fiador Knot.

This year the Solent Branch, IGKT, were invited to attend the Alton Horse and Country Show, as the Surrey Branch IGKT were unable to cover it. Because our annual gathering on Butser Hill had been cancelled this year, we gladly accepted.

Our team leader on this occasion was Gordon Perry and he suggested our theme for this show should be horses: so instead of Barnacle Bill we became Farmer Giles. That meant buffing up on the book 'Knot's for Horse-lovers' by Ron Edwards. Gordon made some plaited rope halters and showed them on a full size display horse's head. Meanwhile I had secured a small wooden horse's head, and made a headstall, with Fiador knot, to catch the eye of the horsie folk.

As the show commenced I had a question put to me, as I thought by a member of the public "can you make a headstall to fit an Alpaca" I was asked. The answer of course is always yes (and you worry later!!). In less than a minute the lady was back on our stand, with a nylon headstall (still warm!!) this being for me to take measurements from. In short, the headstall for an alpaca is technically the same as the one for a horse, with the same number and type of knots, the only difference being that the dimensions required the knots at a different place on the rope you are working with. I attach a photo taken by Bob Pearce of the alpaca 'showing' a knotted headstall. [see back cover - Ed] I placed a Constrictor Knot just above the Fiador Knot as a stop, so it will hang correctly.

For the discerning knot tyer, you will note the throat lash should be fastened with a sheet bend and not the single half hitch as show in the photo. Yes re-training for the Alpaca Keeper is required but as it was pointed out to me by the lady keeper; a prancing alpaca with sharp hoofs — a keeper with open toed sandals—in a public ring, is not the best time and place for master classes in how to tie a single sheet bend. Hence the re-training will take place over a calm cup of coffee later.

On completion of a second head stall for the other alpaca, both of which were being shown in the show ring, I was feeling rather smug, until up stepped another member of the public and I was asked, "Can I show him how to make the cracker for a whip?" Hmm tricky horsie question that, I had seen it somewhere but where? That question was not resolved until I returned home and rang Jeff Wyatt who had met Ron Edwards some time before, so then I find out it is in one of Ron's books I do not own, yet. So now I am up to date for the last question, but will I be ready for the next one?

All round it was a good day; I shall leave the tale about who won a rosette for Gordon to tell.

Ken Yalden.

Our latest meeting was held on the evening of 8th June at our normal venue, the Fareham Sailing and Motor Boat Club. It was trebly interesting in that the first part was our knot of the day, The Hunters Bend. Various people commented on the history of the knot and the fact that the Guild was started on account that the knot was published in a national newspaper and it raised several questions as to it's originality. The point was also raised that it was very similar, though not identical, to the Zeppelin Bend. Those who were unfamiliar with the knots were shown how to tie them. After a short break for refreshment (Tea/Coffee and biscuits), we embarked on part two of the evening. 'Bob' Pearce proceeded to show us the Moravian Star. He then showed all those present how to tie it (though in reality how to construct it would be a fairer term). This had us all engrossed in the task until someone pointed out that it was nearly 2200 (10pm).

The area in which the clubhouse and the adjacent buildings stand was a POW camp for French sailors of the Napoleonic wars. It was built in the mid 18th Century. The clubhouse itself was the hospital/infirmary for the sick, and the surrounding buildings were the Officers accommodation, whilst the ordinary seamen were housed in the prison hulks anchored in the creek. Several club members of the sailing club, swear most strongly, that they have seen a ghostly apparition of an Officer dressed in a blue uniform on the premises. As it happened nothing was seen that night, though no doubt if they had, then their intestines would surely have been tied into some wonderful knots as a result.

POW quarters as part of the Fareham Sailing Club

Hi Lindsey,
A(nother) snippet from the Solent Branch ....

SOLENT BRANCH WIN ROSETTE

By way of a change, the Solent Branch put their nautical knotting on hold to attend the Alton and North East Hampshire Agricultural Show on 4th July. As well as the standard display of ropework, rope making, and macrame our tame horse's head "Badger", on loan from a local Saddlery, took centre stage to illustrate our prowess in making rope tack - Ken Yalden for alpacas and Gordon Perry for horses. All the stands at the show were judged and Solent came out with a 'Special' Rosette for their "Effort and Enthusiasm"

Best Regards
Gordon Perry

West Yorkshire Branch

Dear Fellow Knotters

As usual we extend a warm welcome to any IGKT member to our Branch meeting on **Sunday November 21, 2010.** Because the Autumn IGKT meeting is in Sweden, and it may not be possible for some members to attend, we would be happy to extend our normal one-day meeting, if sufficient people are interested. We can organise activities on the Saturday and, given adequate notice, assist any visitors to find local accomodation. We could also arrange a Saturday evening meal. If anyone would like to join us for other than our normal Sunday meeting, please contact me, David Pearson, in ample time to make any necessary arrangements.
Address and telephone number are in the Diary.
David Pearson
PS Dear Lindsey
Thank you for the KM 107 and the WY Branch mention. Unfortunately, the date of our next meeting is wrong. [*mea culpa* David - see above for correction - Ed]

Last Word

This comes from Barry Mault, Honorary Secretary:

BANNER COMPETITION

Members are invited to design a pull-up banner which we can have made to use at events to advertise the Guild. This is a competition with first and second prizes on offer – £25* and 2 years free membership and £15* and 1 year free membership. The detailed rules are set out separately but the main aim is for an eye catching design which also stresses our international nature by using a simple phrase which can be available in at least 5 languages (together on the banner if possible). It is important to avoid phrases which will not translate easily or have a local idiomatic use. Closing date is not until 31 January 2011 so please try and make the Council's decision difficult by sending us some really good material – there is no limit on the number of entries from one person.

BANNER COMPETITION RULES

Eligibility

1. This competition is open to all members of the IGKT including corporate members except current members of the Council of Trustees.

What is required

2. We are looking for colour designs to be used on vertical banners of the type which are increasingly common – a (usually) vinyl banner which automatically rolls up into a carrying case when not being used. The design should be as near to being ready for printing as possible but the Council reserve the right to make any changes they see necessary before producing actual banners. More technical information is provided below.

3. In addition to graphical information or photographs there is to be a short message which can be reproduced in at least 5 languages (the wording need only be produced in one language 5 times – we will arrange translation as necessary). The message should be in the form of a sound bite or slogan – something which will catch the attention. This is to emphasise the international nature of the Guild as well as make the banner usable in many countries.

4. The Guild logo is to feature prominently at the top of the banner (see Technical Details below).

Copyright

5. The winners of the competition will be required to formally assign the copyright in their work to the Guild in consideration for the prize they are awarded. The design must NOT include any material where the copyright belongs to another person.

Submission of Entries

6. Entries are to be sent to the Hon. Secretary on either CD or DVD. No e-mails please. The **deadline** by which all entries must be received is **midnight GMT on 31 January 2011.**

Prizes

7. There will be 2 prizes – the first prize will be 2 years free membership and a book token to the value of £25.00 (in local currency); the second prize will be one year's free membership and a book token to the value of £15.00. No prizes will be awarded if, in the opinion of the Council, the entries are not of a sufficiently high standard. Equally the award of a prize does not commit the Council to using the design in any way.

Technical details

8. Files are to be submitted in a recognised graphic format viz. JPEG, PDF etc. The printable area should be taken to be 800mm wide by 2100mm deep (31.52 ins by 82.74 ins). We appreciate that entrants may not have the skills to produce CMYK output to the standard required so we will undertake to arrange for an accepted design to be prepared for printing. There are several websites which give more details of the technical requirements and we strongly recommend you look at the essentially technical requirements before you start.

9. The Guild logo is available for download on our website but this is not at sufficiently high resolution – include it as required and it will be replaced by a high resolution version if your entry is successful and is to be used for printing.

Judging Criteria

10. The Council will make the final decision on entries and will look at impact, originality and overall impression. The form of words will be taken into account. Allowance will be made for lack of technical expertise but only to a limited degree.

Knotting Diary and Calendar

GUILD MEETINGS

Autumnal Meeting 2010
Weekend of October 8th/9th, 2010
Karlskrona, Sweden.

Branch Meetings

Alaskan Branch
Every Wednesday evening 6:30 to 8:00
Anchorage Senior Center
1300 E. 19th Avenue, Anchorage
Contact: Mike Livingstone
Tel: (1) 907/929-7888

East Anglian Branch
Contact: Des Pawson
Tel: +44(0)1473 690 090
e-mail: des@despawson.com

French Branch
Contact Graham Maclachlan
www.igktfrance.com

German Branch
Contact Peter Willems
Bauer Lanstr. 200c
24939 Flensburg
Germany
Tel: +49 461 73176
Fax: +49 461 7749318
e-mail: peter@fancyworks.de

Midlands Branch
The Old Swan, Netherton
Contact: Bruce Turley
Tel: 0121 453 4124

NorthWest Branch
Contact: Dave Walker (pending until further notice)
Tel: 01244 682117

Netherlands
Every last Saturday of the month (except December)
De Hoop, Rotterdam
Contact: Jan Hoefnagel
Tel: 078 614-6002

North American Branch - East Region
Contact: None available at press time
Tel: See handbook

North American Branch - Mid-Atlantic Region
Contact: Michael Pollock
Tel: See handbook

North American Branch - Knot In The Middle
Contact: Rusty Helms
Tel: See handbook

Pacific Americas Branch
Second Tuesday of each month,
Los Angeles Maritime Institute
San Pedro, California
Contact: Jimmy Williams
Tel: 1-310/679-6864
e-mail: igktpab@yahoo.com

Solent Branch
Second Tuesday of even-number months
Fareham Sailing and Motor Boat Club
Fareham, Hants UK
Contact: Ken Yalden
Tel: +44(0)23 9225 9280

Surrey Branch

Meetings are held at Guildford District Scout Centre, Nightingale Road, Guildford, starting at 20:00hrs. Please phone for more details.
Contact: Secretary, Peter Goldstone
+44(0)1483 763054

Sussex Branch
For details
Contact:
Tel:

Sweden
Contact: Olof Nystrom tel. 08 265065
Pille Repmakar'n tel 08 6110144

West Country Knotters
Last Saturday of odd months
November 27, 2010 @ 1300 hrs(?)
Tytherington, Nr. Bristol
Contact: Richard Hopkins
Tel: 0117 986 7146

West Yorkshire Branch
Branch meeting 21 November
Contact: David Pearson
Tel: 0113 257 2689

Deadline Dates

Until further notice, the deadlines for getting material to the Editor are as follows:

For the December 2010 issue	1st of November, 2010
For the March 2011 issue	1st of February, 2011
For the June 2011 issue	1st of May, 2011
For the September 2011 issue	1st of August, 2011

Applications are now being accepted for a position as a contributing reporter, for the web-site forum. Please send an interest letter to:

The Editor
Knotting Matters
(Address in handbook)

or e-mail at:
knottingmatters@igkt.net